

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

CRIMINAL NO. 1:18CR40
(Judge Keeley)

TARA PONCEROFF,

Defendant.

ORDER ADOPTING MAGISTRATE JUDGE'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION
CONCERNING PLEA OF GUILTY IN FELONY CASE (DKT. NO. 47),
ACCEPTING GUILTY PLEA, AND SCHEDULING SENTENCING HEARING

On February 14, 2019, the defendant, Tara Ponceroff ("Ponceroff"), appeared before United States Magistrate Judge Michael J. Aloia and moved for permission to enter a plea of GUILTY to Count Two of the Indictment. Ponceroff stated that she understood that the magistrate judge is not a United States district judge, and consented to pleading before the magistrate judge. This Court had referred the guilty plea to the magistrate judge for the purposes of administering the allocution pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 11, making a finding as to whether the plea was knowingly and voluntarily entered, and recommending to this Court whether the plea should be accepted.

Based upon Ponceroff's statements during the plea hearing and the testimony of First Lt. Robert Talkington, the magistrate judge found that Ponceroff was competent to enter a plea, that the plea was freely and voluntarily given, that she was aware of the nature

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of the charges against her and the consequences of her plea, and that a factual basis existed for the tendered plea. On February 15, 2019, the magistrate judge entered an Report and Recommendation Concerning Plea of Guilty in Felony Case ("R&R") (dkt. no. 47) finding a factual basis for the plea and recommended that this Court accept Ponceroff's plea of guilty to Count Two of the Indictment.

The magistrate judge also directed the parties to file any written objections to the R&R within fourteen (14) days after service of the R&R. He further advised that failure to file objections would result in a waiver of the right to appeal from a judgment of this Court based on the R&R. The parties did not file any objections.

Accordingly, this Court **ADOPTS** the magistrate judge's R&R, **ACCEPTS** Ponceroff's guilty plea, and **ADJUGES** her **GUILTY** of the crime charged in Count Two of the Indictment.

Pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 11(c)(3) and U.S.S.G. § 6B1.1(c), the Court **DEFERS** acceptance of the proposed plea agreement until it has received and reviewed the presentence report prepared in this matter.

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Pursuant to U.S.S.G. § 6A1 et seq., the Court **ORDERS** as follows:

1. The Probation Officer shall undertake a presentence investigation of Ponceroff, and prepare a presentence report for the Court;
2. The Government and Ponceroff shall provide their versions of the offense to the probation officer by **March 11, 2019**;
3. The presentence report shall be disclosed to Ponceroff, defense counsel, and the United States on or before **May 6, 2019**; however, the Probation Officer shall not disclose any sentencing recommendations made pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 32(e)(3);
4. Counsel may file written objections to the presentence report on or before **May 20, 2019**;
5. The Office of Probation shall submit the presentence report with addendum to the Court on or before **May 28, 2019**; and
6. Counsel may file any written sentencing statements and motions for departure from the Sentencing Guidelines, including the factual basis from the statements or motions, on or before **May 28, 2019**.

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The magistrate judge remanded Ponceroff to the custody of the United States Marshal Service.

The Court will conduct the sentencing hearing for the defendant on **Monday, June 10, 2019 at 10:30 A.M.** at the **Clarksburg, West Virginia** point of holding court.

It is so **ORDERED**.

The Clerk is directed to transmit copies of this Order to counsel of record and all appropriate agencies.

DATED: March 1, 2019

/s/ Irene M. Keeley
IRENE M. KEELEY
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE